

# Harper Center Bulletin

HARPER CENTER BULLETIN #222

MAY 1ST, 2013

## Williamstown Council on Aging

### May 2013 Newsletter

The Williamstown Council on Aging lives in the Harper Center at 118 Church Street. We're open for business from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. Monday through Friday and Sunday at 11:00 for lunch.

You can call us at 458.8250, fax to 458.5156 or email; bogrady@williamstown.net

We've been serving Williamstown elders and their families since 1966!

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Finally in May! This mid part of the year is always my favorite time, everything is new, the air is clean and green is everywhere and prevailing over the dry brown bones of the year past. Yeah Baby! And with all due respects to April, Spring has finally Sprung!

My wife has planted a colorful array of flowers in the planters outside and it all looks great. I'm sure the rest of the plantings will occur soon as well. Yes, I am aware of the no planting in early May warning.

We'll be bringing the grill out on a regular basis soon, and we're likely to open the outdoor patio for the season next week. Can't wait! It was a loooong winter. The presence of snow always makes it go faster, to me anyway, but we didn't get enough snow last winter to feel like winter. Know what I mean?

It's also the official beginning of ice cream season at Harper. The first of our seasonal ice cream socials will be on Thursday afternoon May 23rd- hot fudge and all the other good stuff that goes with ice cream. Oh-and from all of us here; Happy Mothers Day!

### Friendship Club news...

For those of you who didn't get the memo, the luncheon planned for here at the Harper Center has been moved to the Boston Fish Market instead as there was an issue with the number of reservations for participants actually wanting to come. So away to North Adams you go.

The next official meeting of the club at Harper will be here on Tuesday June 11th. The sign up for food will be in the usual location so remember to volunteer to bring something-you'll have to come in or call us to let us know what you'll bring as you'll be in NA this month. While I'm at it, Maggie asked me to remind everyone about the Project Linus effort-they're meeting twice this month. Otherwise there will be no official collection in May.



## Davis Bates



We'll be celebrating Mother's Day this year with a performance by award winning story teller Davis Bates. Entitled "Celebrating New England: Stories and Songs for Everyone", the program will involve the audience in a variety of cultural traditions. He'll include farming stories, songs from the past and present including sea songs and shanties, Native American stories, ghost stories and family tales. There will be plenty of sing alongs and even a short lesson in how to play the spoons.

Davis has been telling stories for over thirty two years all over New England and around the country. His recording of Family Stories won a Parents Choice Gold Award and was named one of the years best Audio Recordings by Booklist Magazine. When he isn't learning new stories or telling them, he lives with his family in Shelburne Falls gardening; herbs, flowers, heirloom tomatoes, peppers and squash are among his crops.

Davis will be at Harper on Friday May 10, performance will begin at 1:00. He comes to us courtesy of a grant from the Northern Berkshire Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Join us!

## Java with Judy and herbs...

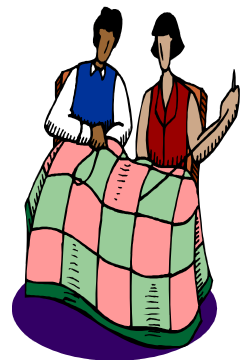


So... after about 10 years of varying success with the annual vegetable garden behind the building, we've decided to create an herb garden instead. We'll have the usual array of cooking herbs out there -some will be perennials but not all-we'll mix in some annuals like basil too. Good thoughts eh? Everyone uses herbs including us!

With that in mind, Java Judy will be back in the house on Wednesday morning May 29th with Paula Savery, a staff member of the activity department at Williamstown commons to talk about creating personal herb gardens. Paula will demonstrate the craft and guess what-they'll provide materials for participants to start their own personal herb garden. And we'll provide breakfast-eggs, bacon, toast, fruit, beverages. Sound good? For this one, we'll need advance reservations so let us know if you're coming by Monday the 27th, OK?

## Project Linus

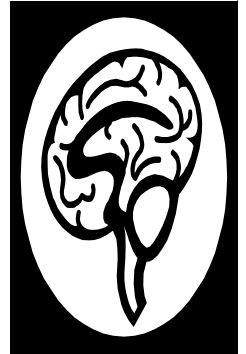
I've done a bit of talking about Project Linus in these pages during the last couple months but soon we're going to hear from the local program coordinator. Project Linus, as we know, is an effort wherein volunteers create blankets and quilts for children who need them. Maggie Guiden has lead the effort from the Harper Center and in April, about 10 folks got together and made some neat things for the program. At 1:00 on May 30, local Project Linus coordinator Louise Palmer will be here to talk about the program, share examples of their work and maybe recruit even more good people to help. Snacks will be cake and ice cream. We'll need to know who's coming so please scribble on the signup sheet.



## Strokes stink...

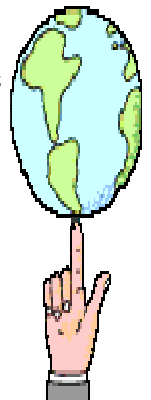
Oh boy, do they ever. How many folks do we know who have had them? Some have had minimal impairment, others have been severely impaired or died as a result. Of course, that's not always the case and in fact modern medical science has progressed to the point where the immediate impact of a stroke— a “cardio vascular accident” as they're called technically—can be significantly reduced by timely medical attention and medications. I can think of people I know who we responded to in the community and even here at the Harper Center and could tell just by looking and listening that it was time to call 911.

May is Stroke Awareness Month, a worthy focus for a months educational projects don't you think? Keeping with the theme, on Tuesday May 7th, Corrine Case from Northern Berkshire Healthcare will be in the building to talk about strokes, their symptoms and how we can all recognize when someone else may be having one. She'll tell us what can be done for stroke victims during as well as aftercare— as well as what the NARH Stroke Support group is up to and how they can help. She'll talk at 12:30 with pizza at noon. You know where the sign up is.



## OLLI

Nope, not Mr. Hardy. It's an educational opportunity for seniors, and it looks like fun. On Tuesday afternoon, May 21, Shirley Shapiro, a representative from OLLI—the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Berkshire Community College will be here to talk about the program. OLLI at BCC is part of a national organization providing fun educational opportunities for interested folks. Locally OLLI has four educational partners including MCLA and Williams as well as BCC and Bard at Simons Rock. They offer approximately 60 courses annually during four semesters—courses have included an Italian Cooking Class, Stained Glass, Birding, educational trips—one was a canoe trip in Arcadia. At the moment, they're involved in an art class at the Clark. See, I told you that it sounds like fun! There are no tests or grades, just the pure joy of learning new and wonderful things. Yes, there are membership costs but they're really minimal. Hey, listening is learning too right? So c'mon in and find out that this is about. Of course there will be a lunch at noon, menu TBD, and the program at 12:30. See you here?



## Kira



Asthma and allergies. Tis the season right? There are all sorts of allergies and many of us are allergic to one thing or another. Allergies are responses to exposure to something which, for most people, cause no symptoms. Like pollen in the air. For me, it's shellfish. Reactions to allergies run the gamut from most to serious and life threatening. Asthma, also an allergic reaction, usually develops in childhood and tends to become less severe in early adulthood, they say. I know people who will differ with that assessment. We have all seen someone in the throes of an asthma attack and the word “inhaler” has joined our vocabulary—we all know what they are. Our friend Kira from Interim Health Care will be in the house on Thursday May 9th at 1:00 to lead an informational conversation on the subject. Snacks? You bet.

## Williamstown Council on Aging

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OK, a final Project Linus note for the month; Maggie's group will meet on Thursday afternoon the 2nd and 16th to work on the project. I suspect that we'll provide some ice cream for the knitters, quilters and sewers here on that day.

Now for the annual File of Life PSA;

File of Life is a simple white card upon which you write your vital medical information such as current medications, allergies, medical conditions, emergency contacts. Important stuff. The information is then placed inside a bright red plastic magnetized envelope to attach to the front of your refrigerator. OK, you all know what I'm talking about right? These things are so important to have and can be crucial in an emergency as all your information is there. We even provide that handy dandy small version for your purse or wallet. Yes, I do push these things, we have plenty of them on hand and I cannot stress how important it is to have one. Hey-you can even note that you have no medical conditions or meds-that's important to know too. So ask us, we're happy to get you one.

## Page Four News and Notes...

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Our foot care magician, Serena Merrill, will be in the house on Tuesday May 21st to work wonders on your feet, clipping nails, reducing calluses and massaging the soreness out. The May dates are filling but there are a couple open slots for appointments. There are spaces in June at the moment too but don't wait too long. We all know what happens.

For those of you who have found yourselves to be challenged by the very technical stuff which comprises our health care insurance paperwork, our health care insurance guru, SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks, will be in the house on Wednesday May 15th at 10:30 to help. Appointments are not necessary but appreciated; Peg is also available for individual consultation outside of normal hours by contacting us in the COA office at 458-8250.

The monthly Blood Pressure Clinic, sponsored by our friends from Sweetbrook, is cancelled for the month of May. We usually hold it the day of Friendship Club but y'all are going off to North Adams for lunch on that day. We tried to reschedule but we just weren't able to get a date when they could come over. They're busy too.

Anyway, Blood Pressure clinic resumes in June on the 11th. Mark it down.

Finally, the monthly Brown Bag, sponsored by the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts will be at Harper for pick up or delivery on Friday May 24th. Brown Bag is literally a brown paper sack filled with shelf stable foods and fresh fruits and veggies in season. Interested? Contact us here at the Harper Center, 458.8250 and we'll help you through a very brief application process.